

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC FORT GIBSON

AND/OR COMMON

Fort Gibson

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER Lee and Ash Streets

CITY, TOWN

Fort Gibson

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd

STATE

Oklahoma

CODE

40

COUNTY

Muskogee

CODE

101

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT☐ BUILDING(S)☐ STRUCTURE☐ SITE☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC☐ PRIVATE☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☐ OCCUPIED☐ UNOCCUPIED☐ WORK IN PROGRESS**ACCESSIBLE**☐ YES: RESTRICTED☒ YES: UNRESTRICTED☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE☐ COMMERCIAL☐ EDUCATIONAL☐ ENTERTAINMENT☐ GOVERNMENT☐ INDUSTRIAL☐ MILITARY☒ MUSEUM☒ PARK☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE☐ RELIGIOUS☐ SCIENTIFIC☐ TRANSPORTATION☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Office of Outdoor Recreation and Planning (Mr. Gage Skinner)

STREET &amp; NUMBER

4020 N. Lincoln Boulevard, Suite 250

CITY, TOWN

Oklahoma City

VICINITY OF

STATE

Oklahoma 73105

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

County Clerk, Muskogee County

STREET &amp; NUMBER

P.O. Box 1008

CITY, TOWN

Muskogee

STATE

Oklahoma 74401

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Historic American Buildings Survey

DATE

1934

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Library of Congress/Annex, Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY, TOWN

Washington, D.C.

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT

☐ GOOD

☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☐ RUINS

☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Fort Gibson was established in 1824. The original fortification consisted of a stockade, square in dimension, with one-story living quarters on three sides and a two-story section, which housed officers on the fourth, east side. The four sides of the fort contained galleries ten feet wide. Two-story blockhouses sat at the northeast and southwest angles of the fort. On the lower story of each of these blockhouses were placed two six pounder cannons. This stockade has been rebuilt. (Photographs no. 4 and no. 5).

Planned to accomodate only five companies, by 1831, the entire Seventh Infantry was assigned to that station. It then became necessary to enlarge the installation. Construction was begun in 1834 on rough buildings on the outside of the fort. These facilites were built to house the recently arrived dragoons who had been exploring the Kiowa and Comanche Territories. It was not until 1845, however, that the importance of Fort Gibson in protecting the southwestern frontier was recognized and provision made for the construction of new facilites instigated. The site of the new fortifications was located some quarter mile from the original fort to the north. With all these efforts, only one building, the commissary, was completed by 1855, some ten years later. Only two years later, in 1857, Fort Gibson was abandoned by federal forces. However, by 1863 the fort was again occupied, this time by Confederate troops. After the war, Fort Gibson was again garrisoned by a small detachment of Federal troops.

The second fort contained the two-story barracks, built of yellow sandstone, five sets of officers' quarters, of which the commanding officer's quarters had 13 rooms and an English basement; the other quarters were simple duplexes of frame with stone foundations, the one-story stone storehouse, the stone commissary-store and the wooden square-shaped guard house. In 1871 a new hospital was erected. Constructed of pine, it consisted of an administration building and a ward constructed as a wing on the building's north side.

Today, there are only two of the major buildings of the original stone fortification. Situated on the north side of highway is the two-story stone barracks. The barracks has a gabled roof and a porch which runs the length of the north elevation. The building is owned by the Oklahoma Historical Society and is not presently opened to the public. Restored during the 1930's the barracks is not now occupied though comparison with earlier photographs indicated that exterior modification has taken place. There is a slight difference in the appearance of the building. In the original construction staircases were located on the exterior of the building. However, in the reconstruction of the barracks by the Oklahoma Historical Society, stairwells were placed on the interior. It now appears that the original plan is being implemented (see Photograph no. 1 ). Otherwise the building appears very much as it did when constructed.

(continued)

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

### PERIOD

### AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW

<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

### SPECIFIC DATES

1824

### BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Matthew Arbuckle

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Established in 1824 by General Matthew Arbuckle, Fort Gibson, during the 1820's and 1830's was one of the most important military posts on the southwestern frontier. It was garrisoned by troops whose mission was to serve the needs of the Indians who had been removed from the East and to protect them from the violent Plains Tribes. It rapidly became the hub of U.S. military and administrative activities on the frontier. Here the army concentrated more troops than occupied all other western stations combined. Colonel Henry Dodge's expedition to the Plains Indians used Fort Gibson as a base of operations in 1834. Returning from the plains, Dodge brought a delegation of Indians with him. A conference at Fort Gibson led to the conclusion at Camp Mason on 1835 of treaties promising that travelers on the Santa Fe Trail would not be molested and guaranteeing peace with the Five Civilized Tribes.

Fort Gibson is owned by the State of Oklahoma and is administered by the Office of Outdoor Recreation and Planning. Located in the town of Fort Gibson, on its western boundary, Fort Gibson is open to the public throughout the year. There is no admission fee to the park area or the fort.

### HISTORY

Fort Gibson, a United States military post named in honor of Colonel George Gibson, was located on the left (east) bank of the Neosho or Grand River, approximately 2 1/2 miles from its confluence with the Arkansas.

On the 21st of April, 1824, two flatboats ascended the Grand River manned by young men of the U. S. Army. As they worked the boats up the river they scanned the shore for a landing place. Near the mouth of the river they discovered a wide ledge of shelving rock on the east bank which made a natural boat landing.

Upon arriving at this site the troops of the 7th Infantry were soon engaged in clearing sufficient space in which to set up their camp. Thus began the months of labor necessary to remove the cane vines, brush, and brambles from an area large enough for an army post.

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## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Foreman, Grant. Advancing the Frontier, (Norman, 1933).  
Hogan, William. Special Report on Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, (Region Three, National Park Service, Oklahoma City, October, 1936).  
Morrison, W.B. Military Posts and Camps in Oklahoma, (Oklahoma City, 1936).  
"The Centennial of Fort Gibson," Chronicles of Oklahoma, VOL. II (1924).

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 42

UTM REFERENCES

A 15 296500 3965000  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
C 15 295250 3964300

B 15 295450 3964300  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
D 15 296250 3965000

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

See continuation sheet.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Joseph Scott Mendingham, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey

DATE

(202) 523-5464

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street, N.W.

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20240

STATE

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Landmark

Designated: Dec 11, 1968

Date

Boundary Certified: Dec 11, 1968

Date

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

(NATIONAL HISTORIC  
LANDMARKS)

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Across the street to the south of the barracks is the commissary.

Built by Seminole Indians and slaves, the stone commissary at Fort Gibson is the oldest stone military building now standing in the State of Oklahoma. Constructed in 1845, the commissary is a 1 1/2 story stone building with gabled roof. There is one interior chimney located on the east side of the building. Presently the windows are boarded up and the building is locked. The Commissary appears in solid structural condition.

There are two lesser sites at the second installation: the powder magazine and the remains of the bake oven. The powder magazine is a small one-story stone building which sits to the west of the commissary (see Photograph no. 2). Construction was begun on this building in 1842. Just west of the powder magazine are the remains of the bake oven built in 1863, evidently by Confederate troops. Indian Ivy climbs the chimney of the bake oven and stones and bricks are neatly placed to indicate the outline of the original building (see Photograph no. 3).

The Zachary Taylor House sits at the junction of Beauregard and Lee Streets on the north end of the Fort Gibson property. The Taylor House is a one-story log cabin raised on stone pillars. The house has two rooms with a central breezeway. The porch runs across the length of the front and rear facades. The house is heated by fireplaces located at each end of the building.

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outside of the fort. These facilities were built to house the recently arrived dragoons who had been exploring the Kiowa and Comanche Territories.

Most of these wood structures belonging to the original fortification by 1835 were in a bad state of decay and the government began to move northeast to higher ground and began to build more permanent structures. In 1845, they completed a large building which was constructed of native stone. This was the commissary. The same year work was commenced on the barracks. In 1846 all construction on the stone barracks ceased because the saw mill burned. The barracks were completed in 1855 and the fort remained unchanged until the time it was abandoned two years later. Fort Gibson was transferred to the representatives of the Cherokee Nation on September 9, 1857.

The fort was reoccupied during the Civil War by Federal forces consisting of three Cherokee regiments, four companies of Kansas Cavalry and Hopkins Battery. The stone buildings were occupied until the close of the war under the name Fort Blunt. On the 17th of September, 1866, on detachment from the First Battalion, 19th U.S. Infantry under the command of Major James B. Milligan arrived at the post and relieved the 62nd Illinois Volunteers, which then constituted the garrison. The post remained garrisoned under the name of Fort Gibson up to September 30, 1871, when it was again dissolved as a military post, but was temporarily retained by the Quartermaster's Department as a depot for such transportation and other means as were necessary to enable paymasters and other officers to communicate with Fort Sill. It was occupied in July, 1872, by two companies of the 10th Cavalry under the command of General Benjamin H. Grierson and thereafter, remained as a military post until finally abandoned on September 22, 1890.

Upon final abandonment, the reservation again reverted to the Cherokee Nation. At that time the reservation contained eight square miles. All the buildings of the original fort, and the stockaded buildings that were established and constructed by Colonel Arbuckle, were no longer in existence.

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Parcel # 1

As indicated on the plat map of the Oklahoma Office of Outdoor Recreation and planning, begin at the intersection of Lee Street and Ash Avenue and proceed in a northeasterly direction along the west curb of Ash Avenue to a point of intersection with the north curb of Beauregard Street,; thence proceed in a southeasterly direction along the northern curb of Beauregard Street to the west curb of Ash Avenue; thence proceed northeast along the west curb to the intersection of Davis Street, Ash Avenue and Stanley Road; thence northwest along the west curb of Stanley Road to the north curb of Irving Street; thence proceed east along the north curb of Irving Street to the western property line of LOT 7, section 19; thence north one half the distance of the lot line; thence in a north-asterlydirection to the point of intersection with Hazen Street; thence east along the south side of Hazen Street the distance of lot 2; thencenorth to the north curb of Hazen Street: thence proceed east along the north curb of Hazen Street to a point of intersection with Harrison Avenue; thence proceed north along the west curb of Harrison Avenue to a point of intersection with the southern edge of the alleyway between Fort and Coppincer Streets; thence proceed west along the south edge of said alleyway to the west curb of Stanley Road; thence north to the old town limits; thence west to a point of intersection with Lee Street extended; thence proceed south along the east curb of Lee Street to the point of origin.

Parcel #2      The "Commissary Tract"

Beginning at the northeast corner of the intersection of Harrison and Hazen Streets, proceed northwest 170', more or less, to a point; thence east 100', more or less, to a point; thence southeast 170', more or less, to the northern curb of Hazen Street; thence west along said curb to the point of origin.

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Parcel # 3 "Boat Landing" Tract

Beginning at the southeast corner of the intersection of Lee and Coppincer Streets, proceed south along the western curb of Lee Street to the north curb of the Freeway; thence west along said curb 170' , more or less, to a point; thence northeast to the north curb of Jackson Street; thence west along said curb to the east bank of the Grand River; thence north along said bank to the south curb of Coppincer Street; thence northeast along said curb to the point of origin.